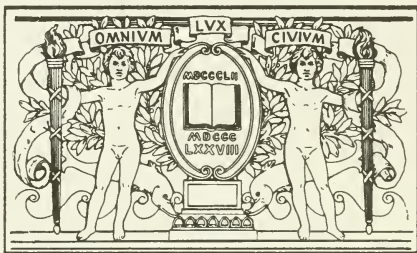


POPPIES AND
..WHEAT..



BY · LOUISA
M · ALCOTT



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“ Before them stood two girls, evidently their charges.” — *Frontispiece.*



POPPIES AND WHEAT

BY

LOUISA M. ALCOTT

AUTHOR OF "LITTLE WOMEN," "LITTLE MEN," "AN OLD-FASHIONED GIRL," "AUNT JO'S SCRAP-BAG,"
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POPPIES AND WHEAT

As the great steamer swung round into the stream the cloud of white handkerchiefs waving on the wharf melted away, the last good-byes grew fainter, and those who went and those who stayed felt that the parting was over, —

“It may be for years, and it may be forever,”

as the song says.

With only one of the many groups on the deck need we concern ourselves, and a few words will introduce our fellow-travellers. A brisk middle-aged lady leaned on the arm of a middle-aged gentleman in spectacles, both wearing the calmly cheerful air of people used to such scenes, and conscious only of the relief change of place brings to active minds and busy lives.

Before them stood two girls, evidently their charges, and as evidently not sisters, for in all respects they were a great contrast. The younger was a gay creature of seventeen, in an effective costume of navy-blue and white, with

bright hair blowing in the wind, sparkling eyes roving everywhere, lively tongue going, and an air of girlish excitement pleasant to see. Both hands were full of farewell bouquets, which she surveyed with more pride than tenderness as she glanced at another group of girls less blessed with floral offerings.

Her companion was a small, quiet person, some years older than herself, very simply dressed, laden with wraps, and apparently conscious just then of nothing but three dark specks on the wharf, as she still waved her little white flag, and looked shoreward with eyes too dim for seeing. A sweet, modest face it was, with intelligent eyes, a firm mouth, and the look of one who had early learned self-reliance and self-control.

The lady and gentleman watched the pair with interest and amusement; for both liked young people, and were anxious to know these two better, since they were to be their guides and guardians for six months. Professor Homer was going abroad to look up certain important facts for his great historical work, and as usual took his wife with him; for they had no family, and the good lady was ready to march to any quarter of the globe at short notice.

Fearing to be lonely while her husband pored over old papers in foreign libraries, Mrs. Homer had invited Ethel Amory, a friend's daughter, to accompany her. Of course the invitation was gladly accepted, for it was a rare opportunity to travel in such company, and Ethel was wild with delight at the idea. One thorn, however, vexed her, among the roses with which her way seemed strewn. Mamma would not let her take a French maid, but preferred a young lady as companion; for, three being an awkward number, a fourth party would be not only convenient, but necessary on the girl's account, since she was not used to take care of herself and Mrs. Homer could only be expected to act as chaperon.

"Jane Bassett is just the person I want, and Jane shall go. She needs a change after teaching all these years; it will do her a world of good, for she will improve and enjoy every moment, and the salary I shall offer her will make it worth her while," said Mrs. Amory, as she discussed the plan with her daughter.

"She is only three years older than I am, and I hate to be taken care of, and watched, and fussed over. I can order a maid round, but a companion is worse than a governess; such

people are always sensitive and proud, and hard to get on with. Every one takes a maid, and I'd set my heart on that nice Marie who wants to go home, and talks such lovely French. Do let me have her, Mamma!" begged Ethel, who was a spoiled child and usually got her own way.

But for once Mamma stood firm, having a strong desire to benefit her daughter by the society of better companions than the gay girls of her own set, also to give a great pleasure to good little Jane Bassett, who had been governessing ever since she was sixteen, with very few vacations in her hard, dutiful life.

"No, darling, I have asked Jane, and if her mother can spare her, Jane it shall be. She is just what you need, — sensible and kind, intelligent and capable; not ashamed to do anything for you, and able to teach you a great deal in a pleasant way. Mrs. Homer approves of her, and I am sure you will be glad by-and-by; for travelling is not all 'fun,' as you expect, and I don't want you to be a burden on our friends. You two young things can take care of each other while the Professor and his wife are busy with their own affairs; and Jane is a far better companion for you than that coquettish French

woman, who will probably leave you in the lurch as soon as you reach Paris. I should n't have a moment's peace if you were left with her, but I have entire confidence in Jane Bassett because she is faithful, discreet, and a true lady in all things."

There was no more to be said, and Ethel pouted in vain. Jane accepted the place with joy; and after a month of delightful hurry they were off, one all eagerness for the new world, the other full of tender regret for the dear souls left behind. How they got on, and what they learned, remains to be told.

"Come, Miss Bassett, we can't see them any longer, so we may as well begin to enjoy ourselves. You might take those things down below, and settle the stateroom a bit; I'm going to walk about and get my bearings before lunch. You will find me somewhere round."

Ethel spoke with a little tone of command, having made up her mind to be mistress and keep Jane Bassett in her place, though she did know three languages and sketched much better than Miss Amory.

Jenny, as we who are going to be her bosom friends will call her, nodded cheerfully, and looked about for the stairway; for, never hav-

ing been on a steamer before, she was rather bewildered.

“I’ll show you the way, my dear. I always get my things settled at once, as one never knows when one may have to turn in. The Professor will go with you, Ethel; it is not proper for you to roam about alone;” and with that hint Mrs. Homer led the way below, privately wondering how these young persons were going to get on together.

Jane swallowed her “heimweh” in silence, and bestirred herself so well that soon the state-room looked very cosy with the wrappers laid ready, the hanging bags tacked up, and all made ship-shape for the ten days’ trip.

“But where are *your* comforts? You have given Ethel all the room, the lower berth, and the best of everything,” said Mrs. Homer, popping in her head to see how her quiet neighbor got on.

“Oh, I live in my trunk; I did n’t bring half as many little luxuries as Ethel did, so I don’t need as much room. I’m used to living in corners like a mouse, and I get on very well,” answered Jane, looking very like a mouse just then, as she peeped out of the upper berth, with her gray gown, bright eyes, and quick nod of contentment.

“Well, my dear, I’ve just one word of advice to give you. Don’t let that child tyrannize over you. She means well, but is wilful and thoughtless, and it is *not* your duty to be made a slave of. Assert yourself and she will obey and respect you, and you will help her a great deal. I know all about it; I was a companion in my youth, and had a hard time of it till I revolted and took my proper place. Now let us go up and enjoy the fine air while we can.”

“Thank you, I will remember;” and Jane offered the good lady her arm, with a feeling of gratitude for such friendliness, all being new and strange to her, and many doubts of her own fitness for the position lying heavy at her heart.

But soon all was forgotten as she sat on deck watching the islands, lighthouses, ships, and shores glide by as she went swiftly out to sea that bright June day. Here was the long-cherished desire of her life come to pass at last, and now the parting with mother and sisters was over, nothing but pleasure remained, and a very earnest purpose to improve this unexpected opportunity to the uttermost. The cares of life had begun early for little Jane, she being the eldest of the three girls, and her mother a widow. First came hard study, then

a timid beginning as nursery governess; and as year by year the teaching of others taught her, she ventured on till here she was companion to a fine young lady "going abroad," where every facility for acquiring languages, studying history, seeing the best pictures, and enjoying good society would all be hers. No wonder the quiet face under the modest gray hat beamed, as it turned wistfully toward the unknown world before her, and that her thoughts were so far away, she was quite unconscious of the kind eyes watching her, as Mrs. Homer sat placidly knitting beside her.

"I shall like the Mouse, I'm quite sure. Hope Lemuel will be as well satisfied. Ethel is charming when she chooses, but will need looking after, that's plain," thought the lady as she glanced down the deck to where her husband stood talking with several gentlemen, while his charge was already making friends with the gay girls who were to be her fellow-passengers.

"Daisy Millers, I fear," went on Mrs. Homer, who had a keen eye for character, and was as fond of studying the people about her as the Professor was of looking up dead statesmen, kings, and warriors. The young ladies

certainly bore some resemblance to the type of American girl which one never fails to meet in travelling. They were dressed in the height of the fashion, pretty with the delicate evanescent beauty of too many of our girls, and all gifted with the loud voices, shrill laughter, and free-and-easy manners which so astonish decorous English matrons and maids. Ethel was evidently impressed with their style, as they had a man and maid at their beck and call, and every sign of ostentatious wealth about them. A stout papa, a thin mamma, evidently worn out with the cares of the past winter, three half-grown girls, and a lad of sixteen made up the party; and a very lively one it was, as the Professor soon found, for he presently bowed himself away, and left Ethel to her new friends, since she smilingly refused to leave them.

“Ought I to go to her?” asked Jenny, waking from her happy reverie to a sudden sense of duty as the gentleman sat down beside her.

“Oh dear, no, she is all right. Those are the Sibleys of New York. Her father knows them, and she will find them a congenial refuge when she tires of us quiet folk; and you too, perhaps?” added the Professor as he glanced at the girl.

“I think not. I should not be welcome to them, nor are they the sort of people I like. I shall be very happy with the ‘quiet folk,’ if they won’t let me be in the way,” answered Jenny, in the cheerful voice that reminded one of the chirp of a robin.

“We won’t; we’ll toss you overboard as soon as you begin to scream and bounce in that style,” he answered, laughing at the idea of this demure young person’s ever dreaming of such a thing. Jenny laughed also, and ran to pick up Mrs. Homer’s ball, as it set out for a roll into the lee-scuppers. As she brought it back she found the Professor examining the book she left behind her.

“Like all young travellers you cling to your ‘Baedeker,’ I see, even in the first excitement of the start. He is a useful fellow, but I know my Europe so well now, I don’t need him.”

“I thought it would be wise to read up our route a little, then I need n’t ask questions. They must be very tiresome to people who know all about it,” said Jenny, regarding him with an expression of deep respect, for she considered him a sort of walking encyclopædia of universal knowledge.

It pleased the learned man, who was kindly

as well as wise, and loved to let his knowledge overflow into any thirsty mind, however small the cup might be. He liked the intelligent face before him, and a timid question or two set him off on his favorite hobby at a pleasant amble, with Jenny on the pillion behind, as it were. She enjoyed it immensely, and was deep in French history, when the lunch gong recalled her from Francis I. and his sister Margaret to chops and English ale.

Ethel came prancing back to her own party, full of praises of the Sibleys, and the fun they meant to have together.

“They are going to the Langham; so we shall be able to go about with them, and they know all the best shops, and some lords and ladies, and expect to be in Paris when we are, and that will be a great help with our dresses and things.”

“But we are not going to shop and have new dresses till we are on our way home, you know. Now we have n’t time for such things, and can’t trouble the Homers with more trunks,” answered Jenny, as they followed their elders to the table.

“I shall buy what I like, and have ten trunks if it suits me. I’m not going to poke round

over old books and ruins, and live in a traveling-dress all the time. You can do as you like; it's different with me, and *I* know what is proper."

With which naughty speech Ethel took her seat first at the table, and began to nod and smile at the Sibleys opposite. Jenny set her lips and made no answer, but ate her lunch with what appetite she could, trying to forget her troubles in listening to the chat going on around her.

All that afternoon Ethel left her to herself, and enjoyed the more congenial society of the new acquaintances. Jenny was tired, and glad to read and dream in the comfortable seat Mrs. Homer left her when she went for her nap.

By sunset the sea grew rough and people began to vanish below. There were many empty places at dinner-time, and those who appeared seemed to have lost their appetites suddenly. The Homers were good sailors, but Jenny looked pale, and Ethel said her head ached, though both kept up bravely till nine o'clock, when the Sibleys precipitately retired after supper, and Ethel thought she might as well go to bed early to be ready for another pleasant day to-morrow.

Jenny had a bad night, but disturbed no one. Ethel slept soundly, and sprang up in the morning, eager to be the first on deck. But a sudden lurch sent her and her hair-brush into a corner; and when she rose, everything in the stateroom seemed to be turning somersaults, while a deathly faintness crept over her.

“Oh, wake up, Jane! We are sinking! What is it? Help me, help me!” and with a dismal wail Ethel tumbled into her berth in the first anguish of seasickness.

We will draw the curtain for three days, during which rough weather and general despair reigned. Mrs. Homer took care of the girls till Jenny was able to sit up and amuse Ethel; but the latter had a hard time of it, for a series of farewell lunches had left her in a bad state for a sea-voyage, and the poor girl could not lift her head for days. The new-made friends did not trouble themselves about her after a call of condolence, but faithful Jenny sat by her hour after hour, reading and talking by day, singing her to sleep at night, and often creeping from her bed on the sofa to light her little candle and see that her charge was warmly covered and quite comfortable. Ethel was used to being petted, so she was not very

grateful; but she felt the watchful care about her, and thought Jane almost as handy a person as a maid, and told her so.

Jenny thanked her and said nothing of her own discomforts; but Mrs. Homer saw them, and wrote to Mrs. Amory that so far the companion was doing admirably and all that could be desired. A few days later she added more commendations to the journal-letters she kept for the anxious mothers at home, and this serio-comical event was the cause of her fresh praises.

The occupants of the deck staterooms were wakened in the middle of the night by a crash and a cry, and starting up found that the engines were still, and something was evidently the matter somewhere. A momentary panic took place; ladies screamed, children cried, and gentlemen in queer costumes burst out of their rooms, excitedly demanding, "What is the matter?"

As no lamps are allowed in the rooms at night, darkness added to the alarm, and it was some time before the real state of the case was known. Mrs. Homer went at once to the frightened girls, and found Ethel clinging to Jenny, who was trying to find the life-preservers lashed to the wall.

“We’ve struck! Don’t leave me! Let us die together! Oh, why did I come? why did I come?” she wailed; while the other girl answered with a brave attempt at cheerfulness, as she put over Ethel’s head the only life-preserver she could find, —

“I will! I will! Be calm, dear! I guess there is no immediate danger. Hold fast to this while I try to find something warm for you to put on.”

In a moment Jenny’s candle shone like a star of hope in the gloom, and by the time the three had got into wrappers and shawls, a peal of laughter from the Professor assured them that the danger could not be great. Other sounds of merriment, as well as Mrs. Sibley’s voice scolding violently, was heard; and presently Mr. Homer came to tell them to be calm, for the stoppage was only to cool the engines, and the noise was occasioned by Joe Sibley’s tumbling out of his berth in a fit of nightmare caused by Welsh rarebits and poached eggs at eleven at night.

Much relieved, and a little ashamed now of their fright, every one subsided; but Ethel could not sleep, and clung to Jenny in an hysterical state till a soft voice began to sing

“Abide with me” so sweetly that more than one agitated listener blessed the singer and fell asleep before the comforting hymn ended.

Ethel was up next day, and lay on the Professor’s bearskin rug on deck, looking pale and interesting, while the Sibleys sat by her talking over the exciting event of the night, to poor Joe’s great disgust. Jenny crept to her usual corner, and sat with a book on her lap, quietly reviving in the fresh air till she was able to enjoy the pleasant chat of the Homers, who established themselves near by and took care of her, learning each day to love and respect the faithful little soul who kept her worries to herself, and looked brightly forward no matter how black the sky might be.

Only one other incident of the voyage need be told; but as that marked a change in the relations between the two girls it is worth recording.

As she prepared for bed late one evening, Mrs. Homer heard Jenny say in a tone never used before, —

“My dear, I must say something to you or I shall not feel as if I were doing my duty. I promised your mother that you should keep early hours, as you are not very strong and

excitement is bad for you. Now, you *won't* come to bed at ten, as I ask you to every night, but stay up playing cards or sitting on deck till nearly every one but the Sibleys is gone. Mrs. Homer waits for us, and is tired, and it is very rude to keep her up. Will you *please* do as you ought, and not oblige me to say you must?"

Ethel was sleepy and cross, and answered pettishly, as she held out her foot to have her boot unbuttoned, — for Jenny, anxious to please, refused no service asked of her, —

"I shall do as I like, and you and Mrs. Homer need n't trouble yourselves about me. Mamma wished me to have a good time, and I shall! There is no harm in staying up to enjoy the moonlight, and sing and tell stories. Mrs. Sibley knows what is proper better than you do."

"I don't think she does, for she goes to bed and leaves the girls to flirt with those officers in a way that I know is *not* proper," answered Jenny, firmly. "I should be very sorry to hear them say of you as they did of the Sibley girls, 'They are a wild lot, but great fun.'"

"Did they say that? How impertinent!"

and Ethel bridled up like a ruffled chicken, for she was not out yet, and had not lost the modest instincts that so soon get blunted when a frivolous fashionable life begins.

“I heard them, and I know that the well-bred people on board do not like the Sibleys’ noisy ways and bad manners. Now, you, my dear, are young and unused to this sort of life; so you cannot be too careful what you say and do, and with whom you go.”

“Good gracious! any one would think *you* were as wise as Solomon and as old as the hills. *You* are young, and *you* have n’t travelled, and don’t know any more of the world than I do, — not so much of some things; so you need n’t preach.”

“I’m not wise nor old, but I *do* know more of the world than you, for I began to take care of myself and earn my living at sixteen, and four years of hard work have taught me a great deal. I am to watch over you, and I intend to do it faithfully, no matter what you say, nor how hard you make it for me; because I promised, and I shall keep my word. We are not to trouble Mrs. Homer with our little worries, but try to help each other and have a really good time. I will do anything for you

that I can, but I shall *not* let you do things which I would n't allow my own sisters to do, and if you refuse to mind me, I shall write to your mother and ask to go home. My conscience won't let me take money and pleasure unless I earn them and do my duty."

"Well, upon my word!" cried Ethel, much impressed by such a decided speech from gentle Jane, and dismayed at the idea of being taken home in disgrace.

"We won't talk any more now, because we may get angry and say what we should be sorry for. I am sure you will see that I am right when you think it over quietly. So good-night, dear."

"Good-night," was all the reply Ethel gave, and a long silence followed.

Mrs. Homer could not help hearing as the staterooms were close together, and the well-ventilated doors made all conversation beyond a whisper audible.

"I did n't think Jane had the spirit to talk like that. She has taken my hint and asserted herself, and I'm very glad, for Ethel must be set right at once or we shall have no peace. She will respect and obey Jane after this, or I shall be obliged to say *my* word."

Mrs. Homer was right, and before her first nap set in she heard a meek voice say, —

“Are you asleep, Miss Bassett?”

“No, dear.”

“Then I want to say, I’ve thought it over. Please *don’t* write to mamma. I’ll be good. I’m sorry I was rude to you; do forgive —”

The sentence was not ended, for a sudden rustle, a little sob, and several hearty kisses plainly told that Jenny had flown to pardon, comfort, and caress her naughty child, and that all was well.

After that Ethel’s behavior was painfully decorous for the rest of the voyage, which, fortunately for her good resolutions, ended at Queenstown, much to her regret. The Homers thought a glimpse at Ireland and Scotland would be good for the girls; and as the Professor had business in Edinburgh this was the better route for all parties. But Ethel longed for London, and refused to see any beauty in the Lakes of Killarney, turned up her nose at jaunting-cars, and pronounced Dublin a stupid place.

Scotland suited her better, and she could not help enjoying the fine scenery with such companions as the Homers; for the Professor knew

all about the relics and ruins, and his wife had a memory richly stored with the legends, poetry, and romance which make dull facts memorable and history enchanting.

But Jenny's quiet rapture was pleasant to behold. She had not scorned Scott's novels as old-fashioned, and she peopled the cottages and castles with his heroes and heroines; she crooned Burns's sweet songs to herself as she visited his haunts, and went about in a happy sort of dream, with her head full of Highland Mary, Tam o' Shanter, field-mice and daisies, or fought terrific battles with Fitz-James and Marmion, and tried if "the light harebell" would "raise its head, elastic from her airy tread," as it did from the Lady of the Lake's famous foot.

Ethel told her she was "clean daft;" but Jenny said, "Let me enjoy it while I can. I've dreamed of it so long I can hardly realize that it has come, and I cannot lose a minute of it;" so she absorbed Scotch poetry and romance with the mist and the keen air from the moors, and bloomed like the bonnie heather which she loved to wear.

"What shall we do this rainy day in this stupid place?" said Ethel, one morning when

bad weather kept them from an excursion to Stirling Castle.

“Write our journals and read up for the visit; then we shall know all about the castle, and need not tire people with our questions,” answered Jenny, already established in a deep window-seat of their parlor at the hotel with her books and portfolio.

“I don’t keep a journal, and I hate to read guide-books; it’s much easier to ask, though there is very little I care for about these mouldy old places,” said Ethel with a yawn, as she looked out into the muddy street.

“How can you say so? Don’t you care for poor Mary, and Prince Charlie, and all the other sad and romantic memories that haunt the country? Why, it seems as real to me as if it happened yesterday, and I never can forget anything about the place or the people now. Really, dear, I think you ought to take more interest and improve this fine chance. Just see how helpful and lovely Mrs. Homer is, with a quotation for every famous spot we see. It adds so much to our pleasure, and makes her so interesting. I’m going to learn some of the fine bits in this book of hers, and make them my own, since I cannot buy the beautiful little

set this Burns belongs to. Don't you want to try it, and while away the dull day by hearing each other recite and talking over the beautiful places we have seen?"

"No, thank you; no study for me. It is to be all play now. Why tire my wits with that Scotch stuff when Mrs. Homer is here to do it for me?" and lazy Ethel turned to the papers on the table for amusement more to her taste.

"But we should n't think only of our own pleasure, you know. It is so sweet to be able to teach, amuse, or help others in any way. I'm glad to learn this new accomplishment, so that I may be to some one by-and-by what dear Mrs. Homer is to us now, if I ever can. Didn't you see how charmed those English people were at Holyrood when she was reciting those fine lines to us? The old gentleman bowed and thanked her, and the handsome lady called her 'a book of elegant extracts.' I thought it was such a pretty and pleasant thing that I described it all to mother and the girls."

"So it was; but did you know that the party was Lord Cumberland and his family? The guide told me afterward. I never guessed they were anybody, in such plain tweed gowns and thick boots; did you?"

“I knew they were ladies and gentlemen by their manners and conversation; did you expect they would travel in coronets and ermine mantles?” laughed Jenny.

“I’m not such a goose! But I’m glad we met them, because I can tell the Sibleys of it. They think so much of titles, and brag about Lady Watts Barclay, whose husband is only a brewer knighted. I shall buy a plaid like the one the lord’s daughter wore, and wave it in the faces of those girls; they do put on *such* airs because they have been in Europe before.”

Jenny was soon absorbed in her books; so Ethel curled herself up in the window-seat with an illustrated London paper full of some royal event, and silence reigned for an hour. Neither had seen the Professor’s glasses rise like two full moons above his paper now and then to peep at them as they chatted at the other end of the room; neither saw him smile as he made a memorandum in his note-book, nor guessed how pleased he was at Jenny’s girlish admiration of his plain but accomplished and excellent wife. It was one of the trifles which went to form his opinion of the two lasses, and in time to suggest a plan which ended in great joy for one of them.

“Now the real fun begins, and I shall be perfectly contented,” cried Ethel as they rolled through the London streets towards the dingy Langham Hotel, where Americans love to congregate.

Jenny’s eyes were sparkling also, and she looked as if quite ready for the new scenes and excitements which the famous old city promised them, though she had private doubts as to whether anything could be more delightful than Scotland.

The Sibleys were at the hotel; and the ladies of both parties at once began a round of shopping and sight-seeing, while the gentlemen went about their more important affairs. Joe was detailed for escort duty; and a fine time the poor lad had of it, trailing about with seven ladies by day and packing them into two cabs at night for the theatres and concerts they insisted on trying to enjoy in spite of heat and weariness.

Mrs. Homer and Jenny were soon tired of this “whirl of gayety,” as they called it, and planned more quiet excursions with some hours each day for rest and the writing and reading which all wise tourists make a part of their duty and pleasure. Ethel rebelled, and much

preferred the "rabble," as Joe irreverently called his troop of ladies, never losing her delight in Regent Street shops, the parks at the fashionable hour, and the evening shows in full blast everywhere during the season. She left the sober party whenever she could escape, and with Mrs. Sibley as chaperon, frolicked about with the gay girls to her heart's content. It troubled Jenny, and made her feel as if she were not doing her duty; but Mrs. Homer consoled her by the fact that a month was all they could give to London, and soon the parties would separate, for the Sibleys were bound for Paris, and the Professor for Switzerland and Germany, through August and September.

So little Jane gave herself up to the pleasures she loved, and with the new friends, whose kindness she tried to repay by every small service in her power, spent happy days among the famous haunts they knew so well, learning much and storing away all she saw and heard for future profit and pleasure. A few samples of the different ways in which our young travellers improved their opportunities will sufficiently illustrate this new version of the gay grasshopper and the thrifty ant.

When they visited Westminster Abbey, Ethel

was soon tired of tombs and chapels, and declared that the startling tableau of the skeleton Death peeping out of the half-opened door of the tomb to throw his dart at Mrs. Nightingale, and the ludicrous bas-relief of some great earl in full peer's robes and coronet being borne to heaven in the arms of fat cherubs puffing under their load, were the only things worth seeing.

Jenny sat spellbound in the Poets' Corner, listening while Mrs. Homer named the illustrious dead around them; followed the verger from chapel to chapel with intelligent interest as he told the story of each historical or royal tomb, and gave up Madame Tussaud's wax-work to spend several happy hours sketching the beautiful cloisters in the Abbey to add to her collection of water-colors, taken as she went from place to place, to serve as studies for her pupils at home.

At the Tower she grew much excited over the tragic spots she visited and the heroic tales she heard of the kings and queens, the noble hearts and wise heads, that pined and perished there. Ethel "hated horrors," she said, and cared only for the crown jewels, the faded effigies in the armor gallery, and the queer

Highlanders skirling on the bagpipes in the courtyard.

At Kew Jenny revelled in the rare flowers, and was stricken with amazement at the *Victoria Regia*, the royal water-lily, so large that a child could sit on one of its vast leaves as on a green island. Her interest and delight so touched the heart of the crusty keeper that he gave her a nosegay of orchids, which excited the envy of Ethel and the Sibley girls, who were of the party, but had soon wearied of plants and gone off to order tea in *Flora's Bower*, — one of the little cottages where visitors repose and refresh themselves with weak tea and Bath buns in such tiny rooms that they are obliged to put their wraps in the fireplace or out of the window while they feast.

At the few parties to which they went, — for the Homers' friends were of the grave, elderly sort, — Jenny sat in a corner taking notes of the gay scene, while Ethel yawned. But the Mouse got many a crumb of good conversation as she nestled close to Mrs. Homer, drinking in the wise and witty chat that went on between the friends who came to pay their respects to the Professor and his interesting wife. Each night Jenny had new and famous

names to add to the list in her journal, and the artless pages were rich in anecdotes, descriptions, and comments on the day's adventures.

But the gem of her London collection of experiences was found in a most unexpected way, and not only gave her great pleasure, but made the young gadabouts regard her with sudden respect as one come to honor.

"Let me stay and wait upon you; I'd much rather than go to the Crystal Palace, for I should n't enjoy it at all with you lying here in pain and alone," said Jenny one lovely morning when the girls came down ready for the promised excursion, to find Mrs. Homer laid up with a nervous headache.

"No, dear, you can do nothing for me, thanks. Quiet is all I need, and my only worry is that I am not able to write up my husband's notes for him. I promised to have them ready last night, but was so tired I could not do it," answered Mrs. Homer, as Jenny leaned over her full of affectionate anxiety.

"Let me do them! I'd be so proud to help; and I can, for I did copy some one day, and he said it was well done. Please let me; I should enjoy a quiet morning here much better than the noisy party we shall have, since the Sibleys are to go."

With some reluctance the invalid consented; and when the rest were gone with hasty regrets, Jenny fell to work so briskly that in an hour or two the task was done. She was looking wistfully out of the window wondering where she could go alone, since Mrs. Homer was asleep and no one needed her, when the Professor came in to see how his wife was before he went to the British Museum to consult certain famous books and parchments.

He was much pleased to find his notes in order, and after a glance at the sleeping lady, told Jenny she was to come with him for a visit to a place which *she* would enjoy, though most young people thought it rather dull.

Away they went; and being given in charge to a pleasant old man, Jenny roamed over the vast Museum where the wonders of the world are collected, enjoying every moment, till Mr. Homer called her away, as his day's work was done. It was late now, but she never thought of time, and came smiling up from the Egyptian Hall ready for the lunch the Professor proposed. They were just going out when a gentleman met them, and recognizing the American stopped to greet him cordially. Jenny's heart beat when she was presented to

Mr. Gladstone, and she listened with all her ears to the silvery un-English voice, and stared with all her eyes at the weary yet wise and friendly face of the famous man.

“I’m so glad! I wanted to see him very much, and I feel so grand to think I’ve really had a bow and a smile all to myself from the Premier of England,” said Jenny in a flutter of girlish delight when the brief interview was over.

“You shall go to the House of Commons with me and hear him speak some day; then your cup will be full, since you have already seen Browning, heard Irving, taken tea with Jean Ingelow, and caught a glimpse of the royal family,” said the Professor, enjoying her keen interest in people and places.

“Oh, thanks! that will be splendid. I do love to see famous persons, because it gives me a true picture of them, and adds to my desire to know more of them, and admire their virtues or shun their faults.”

“Yes, that sort of mental picture-gallery is a good thing to have, and we will add as many fine portraits as we can. Now you shall ride in a Hansom, and see how you like that.”

Jenny was glad to do so, for ladies do not

use these vehicles when alone, and Ethel had put on great airs after a spin in one with Joe. Jenny was girl enough to like to have her little adventures to boast of, and that day she was to have another which eclipsed all that her young companions ever knew.

A brisk drive, a cosy lunch at a famous chop-house where Johnson had drunk oceans of tea, was followed by a stroll in the Park; for the Professor liked his young comrade, and was grateful for the well-written notes which helped on his work.

As they leaned against the railing to watch the splendid equipages roll by, one that seemed well known, though only conspicuous by its quiet elegance, stopped near them, and the elder of the two ladies in it bowed and beckoned to Professor Homer. He hastened forward to be kindly greeted and invited to drive along the Ladies' Mile. Jenny's breath was nearly taken away when she was presented to the Duchess of S——, and found herself sitting in a luxurious carriage opposite her Grace and her companion, with a white-wigged coachman perched aloft and two powdered footmen erect behind. Secretly rejoicing that she had made herself especially nice for her trip with the

Professor, and remembering that young English girls are expected to efface themselves in the company of their elders, she sat mute and modest, stealing shy glances from under her hat-brim at the great lady, who was talking in the simplest way with her guest about his work, in which, as a member of one of the historical houses of England, she took much interest. A few gracious words fell to Jenny's share before they were set down at the door of the hotel, to the great admiration of the porter, who recognized the liveries and spread the news.

"This is a good sample of the way things go in Vanity Fair. We trudge away to our daily work afoot, we treat ourselves to a humble cab through the mud, pause in the park to watch the rich and great, get whisked into a ducal carriage, and come home in state, feeling rather exalted, don't we?" asked the Professor as they went upstairs, and he observed the new air of dignity which Jane unconsciously assumed as an obsequious waiter flew before to open the door.

"I think we do," answered honest Jane, laughing as she caught the twinkle of his eyes behind the spectacles. "I like splendor, and I *am* rather set up to think I've spoken to a

live duchess; but I think I like her beautiful old face and charming manners more than her fine coach or great name. Why, she was much more simply dressed than Mrs. Sibley, and talked as pleasantly as if she did not feel a bit above us. Yet one could n't forget that she was noble, and lived in a very different world from ours."

"That is just it, my dear; she *is* a noble woman in every sense of the word, and has a right to her title. Her ancestors were king-makers, and she is Lady-in-waiting to the Queen; yet she leads the charities of London, and is the friend of all who help the world along. I'm glad you have met her, and seen so good a sample of a true aristocrat. We Americans affect to scorn titles, but too many of us hanker for them in secret, and bow before very poor imitations of the real thing. Don't fill your journal with fine names, as some much wiser folk do, but set down only the best, and remember, 'All that glitters is not gold.'"

"I will, sir." And Jenny put away the little sermon side by side with the little adventure, saying nothing of either till Mrs. Homer spoke of it, having heard the story from her husband.

“How I wish I’d been there, instead of fagging round that great palace full of rubbish! A real Duchess! Won’t the Sibleys stare? We shall hear no more of Lady Watts Barclay after this, I guess, and you will be treated with great respect; see if you are not!” said Ethel, much impressed with her companion’s good fortune and eager to tell it.

“If things of that sort affect them, their respect is not worth having,” answered Jane, quietly accepting the arm Ethel offered her as they went to dinner, — a very unusual courtesy, the cause of which she understood and smiled at.

Ethel looked as if she felt the reproof, but said nothing, only set an example of greater civility to her companion, which the other girls involuntarily followed, after they had heard of Jenny’s excursion with the Professor.

The change was very grateful to patient Jane, who had borne many small slights in proud silence; but it was soon over, for the parties separated, and our friends left the city far behind them, as they crossed the Channel, and sailed up the Rhine to Schwalbach, where Mrs. Homer was to try the steel springs for her rheumatism while the Professor rested after his London labors.

A charming journey, and several very happy weeks followed as the girls roamed about the Little Brunnen, gay with people from all parts of Europe, come to try the famous mineral waters, and rest under the lindens.

Jenny found plenty to sketch here, and was busy all day booking picturesque groups as they sat in the Allée Saal, doing pretty woodland bits as they strolled among the hills, carefully copying the arches and statues in St. Elizabeth's Chapel, or the queer old houses in the Jews' Quarter of the town. Even the pigs went into the portfolio, with the little swineherd blowing his horn in the morning to summon each lazy porker from its sty to join the troop that trotted away to eat acorns in the oak wood on the hill till sunset called them home again.

Ethel's chief amusement was buying trinkets at the booths near the Stahlbrunnen. A tempting display of pretty crystal, agate, and steel jewelry was there, with French bonbons, Swiss carvings, German embroidery and lace-work, and most delectable little portfolios of views of fine scenery or illustrations of famous books. Ethel spent much money here, and added so greatly to her store of souvenirs that a new



“The girls amused themselves gathering flowers by the way.” — Page 37.

trunk was needed to hold the brittle treasures she accumulated in spite of the advice given her to wait till she reached Paris, where all could be bought much cheaper and packed safely for transportation.

Jenny contented herself with a German book, Kaulbach's Goethe Gallery, and a set of ornaments for each sister; the purple, pink, and white crystals being cheap and pretty trinkets for young girls. She felt very rich with her generous salary to draw upon when she liked; but having made a list of proper gifts, she resisted temptation and saved her money, remembering how much every penny was needed at home.

Driving from the ruins of Hohenstein one lovely afternoon, the girls got out to walk up a long hill, and amused themselves gathering flowers by the way. When they took their places again, Ethel had a great bouquet of scarlet poppies, Jenny a nosegay of blue cornflowers for Mrs. Homer, and a handful of green wheat for herself:

"You look as if you had been gleaning," said the Professor, as he watched the girls begin to trim their rough straw hats with the gay coquelicots and the bearded ears.

“I feel as if I were doing that every day, sir, and gathering in a great harvest of pleasure, if nothing else,” answered Jenny, turning her bright eyes full of gratitude from one kind face to the other.

“My poppies are much prettier than that stiff stuff. Why did n’t you get some?” asked Ethel, surveying her brilliant decoration with great satisfaction.

“They don’t last; but my wheat will, and only grow prettier as it ripens in my hat,” answered Jenny, contentedly settling the graceful spires in the straw cord that bound the pointed crown.

“Then the kernels will all drop out and leave the husks; that won’t be nice, I’m sure,” laughed Ethel.

“Well, some hungry bird will pick them up and be glad of them. The husks will last a long time and remind me of this happy day; your poppies are shedding their leaves already, and the odor is not pleasant. I like my honest bread-making wheat better than your opium flowers,” said Jenny, with her thoughtful smile, as she watched the scarlet petals float away leaving the green seed-vessels bare.

“Oh, I shall get some artificial ones at my

little milliner's, and be fine as long as I like; so you are welcome to your useful, bristly old wheat," said Ethel, rather nettled by the look that passed between the elders.

Nothing more was said; but both girls remembered that little talk long afterward, for those two wayside nosegays served to point the moral of this little tale, if not to adorn it.

We have no space to tell all the pleasant wanderings of our travellers as they went from one interesting place to another, till they paused for a good rest at Geneva.

Here Ethel quite lost her head among the glittering display of jewelry, and had to be watched lest she rashly spend her last penny. They were obliged almost forcibly to carry her out of the enchanting shops; and no one felt safe till she was either on the lake, or driving to Chamouni, or asleep in her bed.

Jenny bought a watch, a very necessary thing for a teacher, and this was the best place to get a good one. It was chosen with care and much serious consultation with the Professor; and Mrs. Homer added a little chain and seal, finding Jenny about to content herself with a black cord.

"It is only a return for many daughterly

services, my dear; and my husband wishes me to offer these with thanks to the patient secretary who has often helped him so willingly," she said, as she came to wake Jenny with a kiss on the morning of her twenty-first birthday.

A set of little volumes like those she had admired was the second gift, and Jenny was much touched to be so kindly remembered. Ethel gave her some thread lace which she had longed to buy for her mother at Brussels, but did not, finding it as costly as beautiful. It was a very happy day, though quietly spent sitting by the lake enjoying the well-chosen extracts from Shakspeare, Wordsworth, Byron, Burns, Scott, and other descriptive poets, and writing loving letters home, proudly stamped with the little seal.

After that, while Ethel haunted the brilliant shops, read novels in the hotel-garden, or listlessly followed the sight-seers, Jenny, with the help of her valuable little library, her industrious pencil, and her accomplished guides, laid up a store of precious souvenirs as they visited the celebrated spots that lie like a necklace of pearls around the lovely lake, with Mont Blanc as the splendid opal that fitly clasps the chain. Calvin and Geneva, Voltaire

and Ferney, De Staël and Coppet, Gibbon's garden at Lausanne, Byron's Prisoner at Chillon, Rousseau's chestnut grove at Clarens, and all the legends, relics, and memories of Switzerland's heroes, romancers, poets, and philosophers, were carefully studied, recorded, and enjoyed; and when at last they steamed away toward Paris, Jenny felt as if her head and her heart and one little trunk held richer treasures than all the jewelry in Geneva.

At Lyons her second important purchase was made; for when they visited one of the great manufactories to execute several commissions given to Mrs. Homer, Jenny proudly bought a nice black silk for her mother. This, with the delicate lace, would make the dear woman presentable for many a day, and the good girl beamed with satisfaction as she pictured the delight of all at home when this splendid gift appeared to adorn the dear parent-bird, who never cared how shabby she was if her young were well feathered.

It was a trial to Jenny, when they reached Paris, to spend day after day shopping, talking to dressmakers, and driving in the Bois to watch the elegant world on parade, when she longed to be living through the French Revo-

lution with Carlyle, copying the quaint relics at Hôtel Cluny, or revelling in the treasures of the Louvre.

“Why *do* you want to study and poke all the time?” asked Ethel, as they followed Mrs. Homer and a French acquaintance round the Palais Royal one day with its brilliant shops, cafés, and crowds.

“My dream is to be able to take a place as teacher of German and history in a girls’ school next year. It is a fine chance, and I am promised it if I am fitted; so I must work when I can to be ready. That is why I like Versailles better than Rue de Rivoli, and enjoy talking with Professor Homer about French kings and queens more than I do buying mock diamonds and eating ices here,” answered Jenny, looking very tired of the glitter, noise, and dust of the gay place when her heart was in the Conciergerie with poor Marie Antoinette, or the Invalides, where lay the great Napoleon still guarded by his faithful Frenchmen.

“What a dismal prospect! I should think you’d rather have a jolly time while you could, and trust to luck for a place by-and-by, if you must go on teaching,” said Ethel, stopping to admire a window full of distracting bonnets.

“No; it is a charming prospect to me, for I love to teach, and I can’t leave anything to luck. God helps those who help themselves, mother says, and I want to give the girls an easier time than I have had; so I shall get my tools ready, and fit myself to do good work when the job comes to me,” answered Jenny, with such a decided air that the French lady glanced back at her, wondering if a quarrel was going on between the demoiselles.

“What do you mean by tools?” asked Ethel, turning from the gay bonnets to a ravishing display of bonbons in the next window.

“Professor Homer said one day that a well-stored mind was a tool-chest with which one could carve one’s way. Now, my tools are knowledge, memory, taste, the power of imparting what I know, good manners, sense, and — patience,” added Jenny, with a sigh, as she thought of the weary years spent in teaching little children the alphabet.

Ethel took the sigh to herself, well knowing that she had been a trial, especially of late, when she had insisted on Jane’s company because her own French was so imperfect as to be nearly useless, though at home she had flattered herself that she knew a good deal.

Her own ignorance of many things had been unpleasantly impressed upon her lately, for at Madame Dene's Pension there were several agreeable English and French ladies, and much interesting conversation went on at the table, which Jenny heartily enjoyed, though she modestly said very little. But Ethel, longing to distinguish herself before the quiet English girls, tried to talk and often made sad mistakes because her head was a jumble of new names and places, and her knowledge of all kinds very superficial. Only the day before she had said in a patronizing tone to a French lady, —

“Of course we remember our obligations to your Lamartine during our Revolution, and the other brave Frenchmen who helped us.”

“You mean Lafayette, dear,” whispered Jenny quickly, as the lady smiled and bowed, bewildered by the queerly pronounced French, but catching the poet's name.

“I know what I mean; you need n't trouble yourself to correct and interrupt me when I'm talking,” answered Ethel, in her pert way, annoyed by a smile on the face of the girl opposite, and Jenny's blush at her rudeness and ingratitude. She regretted both when

Jane explained the matter afterward, and wished that she had at once corrected what would then have passed as a slip of the tongue. Now it was too late; but she kept quiet and gave Miss Cholmondeley no more chances to smile in that aggravatingly superior way, though it was very natural, as she was a highly educated girl.

Thinking of this, and many other mistakes of her own from which Jane tried to save her, Ethel felt a real remorse, and walked silently on, wondering how she could reward this kind creature who had served her so well and was so anxious to get on in her hard, humble way. The orders were all given now, the shopping nearly done, and Mademoiselle Campan, the elderly French lady who boarded at their Pension, was always ready to jaunt about and be useful; so why not give Jane a holiday, and let her grub and study for the little while left them in Paris? In a fortnight Uncle Sam was to pick up the girls and take them home, while the Homers went to Rome for the winter. It would be well to take Miss Bassett back in a good humor, so that her report would please Mamma, and appease Papa if he were angry at the amount of money spent by his extravagant little daughter. Ethel saw now, as one always

does when it is too late to repair damages, many things left undone which she ought to have done, and regretted living for herself instead of putting more pleasure into the life of this good girl, whose future seemed so uninviting to our young lady with her first season very near.

It was a kind plan, and gratified Jenny very much when it was proposed, and proved to her that no duty would be neglected if she went about with the Homers and left her charge to the excellent lady who enjoyed *chiffons* as much as Ethel did, and was glad to receive pretty gifts in return for her services.

But alas for Ethel's good resolutions and Jenny's well-earned holiday! Both came to nothing, for Ethel fell ill from too much pastry, and had a sharp bilious attack which laid her up till the uncle arrived.

Every one was very kind, and there was no danger; but the days were long, the invalid very fretful, and the nurse very tired, before the second week brought convalescence and a general cheering and clearing up took place. Uncle Sam was amusing himself very comfortably while he waited for his niece to be able to travel, and the girls were beginning to pack

by degrees, for the accumulation of Ethel's purchases made her share a serious task.

"There! All are in now, and only the steamer trunk is left to pack at the last moment," said Jenny, folding her tired arms after a protracted struggle with half a dozen new gowns, and a perplexing medley of hats, boots, gloves, and perfumery. Two large trunks stood in the anteroom ready to go; the third was now done, and nothing remained but the small one and Jenny's shabby portmanteau.

"How nicely you have managed! I ought to have helped, only you wouldn't let me and I should have spoilt my wrapper. Come and rest and help me sort out this rubbish," said Ethel, who would have been dressed and out if the arrival of a new *peignoir* had not kept her in to enjoy the lovely pink and blue thing, all lace and ribbon and French taste.

"You will never get them into that box, dear," answered Jenny, gladly sitting down beside her on the sofa, which was strewn with trinkets of all sorts, more or less damaged by careless handling, and the vicissitudes of a wandering trunk.

"I don't believe they are worth fussing over. I'm tired of them, and they look very mean

and silly after seeing real jewels here. I'd throw them away if I had n't spent so much money on them," said Ethel, turning over the tarnished filigree, mock pearl, and imitation coral necklaces, bracelets, and brooches that were tumbling out of the frail boxes in which they came.

"They will look pretty to people at home who have not been seeing so many as we have. I'll sew up the broken cases, and rub up the silver, and string the beads, and make all as good as new, and you will find plenty of girls at home glad to get them, I am sure," answered Jenny, rapidly bringing order out of chaos with those skilful hands of hers.

Ethel leaned back and watched her silently for a few minutes. During this last week our young lady had been thinking a good deal, and was conscious of a strong desire to tell Jane Bassett how much she loved and thanked her for all her patient and faithful care during the six months now nearly over. But she was proud, and humility was hard to learn; self-will was sweet, and to own one's self in the wrong a most distasteful task. The penitent did not know how to begin, so waited for an opportunity, and presently it came.

“Shall you be glad to get home, Jenny?” she asked in her most caressing tone, as she hung her prettiest locket round her friend’s neck; for during this illness all formality and coolness had melted away, and “Miss Bassett” was “Jenny dear” now.

“I shall be very, very glad to see my precious people again, and tell them all about my splendid holiday; but I can’t help wishing that we were to stay till spring, now that we are here, and I have no teaching, and may never get such another chance. I’m afraid it seems ungrateful when I’ve had so much; but to go back without seeing Rome is a trial, I confess,” answered honest Jane, rubbing away at a very dull paste bandeau.

“So it is; but I don’t mind so much, because I shall come again by-and-by, and I mean to be better prepared to enjoy things properly than I am now. I’ll really study this winter, and not be such a fool. Jenny, I’ve a plan in my head. I wonder if you’d like it? I should immensely, and I’m going to propose it to Mamma the minute I get home,” said Ethel, glad to seize this opening.

“What is it, deary?”

“Would you like to be my governess and

teach me all you know, quietly, at home this winter? I don't want to begin school again just for languages and a few finishing things, and I really think you would do more for me than any one else, because you know what I need, and are so patient with your bad, ungrateful, saucy girl. Could you? would you come?" and Ethel put her arms round Jenny's neck with a little sob and a kiss that was far more precious to Jane than the famous diamond necklace of Marie Antoinette, which she had been reading about.

"I could and I would with all my heart, if you want me, darling! I think we know and love each other now, and can be happy and helpful together, and I'll come so gladly if your mother asks me," answered Jenny, quick to understand what underlay this sudden tenderness, and glad to accept the atonement offered her for many trials which she would never have told even to her own mother.

Ethel was her best self now, and her friend felt well rewarded for the past by this promise of real love and mutual help in the future. So they talked over the new plan in great spirits till Mrs. Homer came to bring them their share of a packet of home letters just arrived. She



“And sitting side by side in an affectionate bunch, the girls read the happy news.” — Page 51.

saw that something unusual was going on, but only smiled, nodded, and went away, saying, —

“I have good news in *my* letters, and hope yours will make you equally happy, girls.”

Silence reigned for a time, as they sat reading busily; then a sudden exclamation from Ethel seemed to produce a strange effect upon Jenny, for with a cry of joy she sprang up and danced all over the room, waving her letter wildly as she cried out,—

“I’m to go! I’m to go! I can’t believe it —but here it is! How kind, how very kind, every one is to me!” and down she went upon her own little bed to hide her face and laugh and cry till Ethel ran to rejoice with her.

“Oh, Jenny, I’m so glad! You deserve it, and it’s like Mrs. Homer to make all smooth before she said a word. Let me read what Mamma writes to you. Here’s my letter; see how sweetly she speaks of you, and how grateful they are for all you’ve done for me.”

The letters changed hands; and sitting side by side in an affectionate bunch, the girls read the happy news that granted the cherished wish of one and gave the other real unselfish pleasure in another’s happiness.

Jane was to go to Rome with the Homers for

the winter, and perhaps to Greece in the spring. A year of delight lay before her, offered in such a friendly way, and with such words of commendation, thanks, and welcome, that the girl's heart was full, and she felt that every small sacrifice of feeling, every lonely hour, and distasteful duty was richly repaid by this rare opportunity to enjoy still further draughts of the wisdom, beauty, and poetry of the wonderful world now open to her.

She flew off presently to try to thank her good friends, and came back dragging a light new trunk, in which she nearly buried her small self as she excitedly explained its appearance, while rattling out the trays and displaying its many conveniences.

"That dear woman says I'm to send my presents home in the old one by you, and take this to fill up in Rome. Think of it! A lovely new French trunk, and Rome full of pictures, statues, St. Peter's, and the Colosseum. It takes my breath away and makes my head spin."

"So I see. It's a capital box, but it won't hold even St. Peter's, dear; so you'd better calm down and pack your treasures. I'll help," cried Ethel, sweeping about in her gay

gown, almost as wild as Jane, who was quite upset by this sudden delicious change in her prospects.

How happily she laid away in the old trunk the few gifts she had ventured to buy, and those given her, — the glossy silk, the dainty lace, the pretty crystals, the store of gloves, the flask of cologne, the pictures and books, and last of all the sketches which illustrated the journal kept so carefully for those at home.

“Now, when my letter is written and the check with all that is left of my salary put in, I am done. There’s room for more, and I wish I’d got something else, now I feel so rich. But it is foolish to buy gowns to pay duties on, when I don’t know what the girls need. I feel so rich now, I shall fly out and pick up some more little pretties for the dears. They have so few, anything will be charming to them,” said Jenny, proudly surveying her box, and looking about for some foreign trifle with which to fill up the corners.

“Then let me put these in, and so be rid of them. I shall go to see your people and tell them all about you, and explain how you came to send so much rubbish.”

As she spoke Ethel slipped in several Swiss

carvings, the best of the trinkets, and a parcel of dainty Parisian ties and sashes which would gladden the hearts of the poor, pretty girls, just beginning to need such aids to their modest toilets. A big box of bonbons completed her contribution, and left but one empty corner.

“I’ll tuck in my old hat to keep all steady; the girls will like it when they dress up, and I’m fond of it, because it recalls some of my happiest days,” said Jenny, as she took up the well-worn hat and began to dust it. A shower of grain dropped into her hand, for the yellow wheat still kept its place and recalled the chat at Schwalbach. Ethel glanced at her own hat with its faded artificial flowers; and as her eye went from the small store of treasures so carefully and happily gathered to the strew of almost useless finery on her bed, she said soberly, —

“You were right, Jenny. My poppies are worthless, and my harvest a very poor one. Your wheat fell in good ground, and you will glean a whole stack before you go home. Well, I shall keep *my* old hat to remind me of you; and when I come again, I hope I shall have a wiser head to put into a new one.”



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